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ABSTRACT

This paper offers a critical approach to television viewing that considers the literary and rhetorical impact of television programing. The methodology described is composed of three stages of criticism that are designed to examine and describe television drama: (1) the descriptive stage, in which the critic examines the plot, characters, production techniques, sound elements, tone, purpose, method of story development, dramatic strategies, and the implied audience and the implied author of the work; (2) the analytic stage, in which the critic examines the actual audience of the work, the issue it presents, and its historical context; and (3) the judgmental or evaluative stage, in which the critic poses certain questions in order to make final methodological decisions about how to best illuminate and evaluate the drama. (FL)

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A Methodology for Criticism of Television

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A Methodology for Criticism of Television

I introduce in this paper a hybrid breed of criticism unlike any other which has been applied to television. As used in this paper, criticism describes, analyzes, interprets, and evaluates the televised event as a literary/rhetorical act. In so doing it is concerned with both the intrinsic, aesthetic features of that act and with the potential effects of that act on its audience. Critical evaluation is then based on the aesthetic quality of the act and on the ethical impact of the act on its audience. Good criticism of television should seek to achieve these ends in order to increase the audience's understanding, enjoyment, and appreciation of the act in question.

Until recently television has received very little serious criticism. What has been written in magazines and newspapers and by scholars as well may be classified as follows:

1. Rundowns of each new television season in which writers provide brief plot summaries and remark about the general quality of the content and technical production.

2. Interpretations of one TV series as a whole dealing with content and sometimes audience effects.

3. Reviews of one episode of one series.

4. Discussions of current industry issues in television such as programming content (violence and sex, children's programs), media technology (cable, video recorders), laws, and advertising. These issues may be discussed in general or with reference to specific programs.

5. Stories on series stars.

6. Stories on filming and production.

7. Miscellaneous reviews dealing with such things as using commercial television in the classroom and critics writing about the state of criticism.

8. Treatments of broad types of programming, loosely termed "genres," such as westerns, medical shows, soap operas, police dramas, and situation comedies.

Only a few reviews in these categories approach serious and thorough criticism.

Not much criticism considers the literary/rhetorical impact of television nor does it provide reasoned arguments or clear textual evidence to support claims. When a critic makes a moral-ethical judgment, he or she should reveal the philosophical assumptions on which it is based. Finally, a reader should be able to follow the argumentative process used by the critic and to identify the criteria for judgment. Good criticism should also consider the effect of specific television programs and the medium as a whole on their audiences.

My critical approach, which can be used effectively with one episode, a whole series, or comparatively between series, requires inductive description before evaluative statements can be made. As a comparative tool the methodology provides extensive and rich material for formularyand generic treatments of programming. When done properly, such generic or formulary treatments can reveal qualities which are characteristic of the medium as a whole, and these qualities can enable readers to understand the affinities and traditions among television programs and to assess the long-term impact of television more thoroughly.

Methodology

This methodology is designed to describe, analyze, and evaluate television in a wholistic manner. Television is a combination of various art forms

including literature, drama, and film. It works through these forms to create its effects. Specifically, a television drama is made up of plot, character, mise en scène, setting, costume, lighting, dialog, narration, music, camera angles, and other production elements. These are rhetorical and dramatic components that a critic must consider in order to discover the nature of the message in a rhetorical sense and the nature of the techniques used to make the message appealing and plausible in both rhetorical and dramatic ways. To that end this methodology is meant to be an exhaustive statement of the elements to be considered. Ideally, it should describe individual episodes in subtle detail and prepare the critic for the task of determining formulaic similarities between episodes and series.

In describing a speech one may look for its arguments, its uses of evidence, how it is delivered, or its system of proofs. To describe television, one must develop comparable categories. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell has designed a system of descriptive analysis which is an excellent tool when applied to speeches, essays, or other kinds of verbal rhetoric. As it stands the system can be used to describe dialog, but it is not adequate to describe the technical and dramatic aspects of television programs. Using Campbell's system as a basis, I have developed a system which is adapted to the medium of television. The system outlines three stages of criticism which are designed to examine and describe television drama. A large part of the outline treating plot, character, and dialog is based on Elder Olson's Tragedy and the Theory of Drama.

I. The Descriptive Stage of the Critical Process.

In order to write criticism, one must first know the object to be criticized. Edwin Black calls this the re-creative stage of criticism, and its aim is to enable the critic to know the work thoroughly. Re-creation involves an

inductive description of the work itself.[1] According to Campbell,

> Description is entirely intrinsic and organic. All the data for descriptive statements should come from the . . . [drama] itself, not from any outside information. . . . All extrinsic, historical data apart from the . . . [drama] should be ignored at this stage.[2]

A. Plot.

1. Plot lines.

a. Is there one plot line or is there a main plot line with one or more subplots?

b. If there are multiple plot lines, describe their relationship to one another. Elder Olson writes:

> Lines of action . . . either converge or diverge or run parallel . . . . Divergence is commonest at the beginning of an action, as permitting complication; convergence is commonest at the end, to achieve resolution. Threatened convergence is one way of obtaining suspense, when the convergence is such as to affect the outcome materially; sudden convergence is one way of obtaining surprise.[3]

Olson explains that plot lines can form multiple patterns in relationship to each other. Insight into divergence and convergence is essential to fully understanding the drama.[4]

2. Unifying Principles.

Describe the unifying principle of the main plot and subplots, and point out the plot incidents related to the unifying principle that help produce the desired emotions and responses.

a. The consequential principle of unification is characterized by what Olson calls "a train of consequences. The train has a beginning, an initiating incident. . . . and it has a terminating incident. . . . Everything in between is in some way an effect of beginning and a cause of the end. . . ."[5] Identify the specific plot incidents that drive the causal sequence. The feature film Alien has a consequential principle of unification. The

initiating incident, the S.O.S. transmission, starts the causal sequence that proceeds through the entire film.

b. The descriptive principle of unification merely presents a situation, an interaction, or a set of circumstances often from several different perspectives. "The significant thing about this sort of plot is that it is complete in the sense in which a description is complete when it has adequately described its object."[6] "The essential incidents are those which embody typical aspects or attributes of the object; in a sense, they are illustrative anecdotes in the dramatic form. . . ."[7] Robert Altman's films Nashville and A Wedding have descriptive principles of unification. In these films a series of vignettes depicts the recording industry in Nashville in one case and different people's experiences at a wedding in the other.

c. The pattern principle of unification limits plot development. According to Olson, a certain form or pattern emerges early in the drama which is repeated again and again. He says, "there are many possible patterns."[8] The repetition of patterns can involve similar incidents, a repeated theme, similar causes, etc.[9]

d. With the didactic principle of unification all aspects of the drama serve to prove the messages of the drama. Olson calls this a pièce à thèse.[10] A thesis is stated directly, and the enactment, music, lighting, characters, and other features of the drama are used to develop and reinforce that thesis.

3. Probability or Plausibility of the Plot.

a. Natural Probability.

> We think an event probable if it happens daily or usually or frequently, to most people, or to most people at some time or other, or at any rate to people of a certain kind; and we think an action probable if everyone or most people or people of a certain kind have the power and the inclination to do it. This . . . is the kind of probability on which realistic and naturalistic plots are based.[11]

b. Conditional Natural Probability.

> We also think that rare and unusual occurrences are probable too, in certain circumstances, providing we believe that adequate causes exist, or that there are adequate indications that the occurrences happened. . . . Tragedy depends on it, and so does melodrama of the better sort.[12]

c. Hyperbolical Probability.

> We also accept as probable certain things of a highly exaggerated nature, because we recognize that the exaggeration, patently preposterous as it is, is only figurative and contains an element of truth. This . . . underlies farce.[13]

d. Hypothetical Probability.

> We even accept as probable the actions of beings we know do not exist, or actions which existent beings could not possibly perform, provided these follow upon a certain hypothesis. If witches, ghosts, and fairies existed, they would do such and such. . . . Hypothetical probability . . . underlies all fantasy and stories of the supernatural.[14]

e. Conventional or Formal Probability.

> We will accept anything as probable which corresponds to something already accepted. Thus a plot which follows a familiar legend or a familiar version of historical events will be accepted as probable, even though these latter contain improbabilities or impossibilities. No one will question the feats of Paul Bunyan, or George Washington's cherry tree. This holds, too, of certain forms; for instance, we expect certain things to happen in a Western, improbable as they may be. This is the probability of custom. . . .[15]

f. Emotional Probability.

> This may be completely irrational and in no way connected with logical probability. A given emotion predisposes us to believe certain things, even though they may be impossible. . . . An audience in a certain emotional state will . . . accept things that in another it would question.[16]

One needs to identify how emotional probability is used. One specific type is sentimentality, the evocation of cliché emotional responses. Most particularly, one needs to determine how emotional probability is used as a part of the didactic proof of the pièce à thèse. Regardless of the unifying principle, one needs to establish how emotional probability is related to other kinds of probability. Richard L. Johannesen provides some guidance

for judging the ethical nature of the use of emotional probability:

> The "emotional" technique is ethical if it is undergirded by a substructure of sound evidence and reasoning to support it. . . . When a sound proposal is linked to satisfaction of relevant audience emotions, values, and motives, then the appeal probably is ethical. If the audience is asked to view the emotional appeal not as proof or justification but as an expression of the communicator's internal emotional state, it probably is ethical. Generally, the emotional appeal is ethically suspect when it functions as pseudo-proof giving the appearance of sound evidence or when it functions to short-circuit the receiver's capacity for free, informed, critical choice.[17]

4. Denouement--how are the intricacies of the plot unraveled? How are conflicts treated? Are conflicts resolved, transcended, or left unresolved?

B. Characters.

1. What are the characters' values and qualities? Are the characters stereotypic, one-dimensional, simple, complex, unique, realistic, etc.? What are their virtues, vices, flaws? Do they manifest typical human inconsistencies, or is their behavior always predictable?

2. What functions do the characters play in relationship to the purpose or themes of the drama? For example, which characters are essential to the story line? Which characters serve a narrative function?

3. How probable or plausible are these characters, their relationships, and the situations they are in? Are the characters vivid and convincing?

4. What is the mise en scène of the drama, i.e., how are the interactions among characters reflected in their movements and in their physical positions with relation to one another? How is the movement and position of characters related to the setting? How does mise en scène define relationship? How does mise en scène contribute to the development of action? How does it establish the relative power and influence of characters?

C. Production.

Production consists of the many vehicles, in addition to plot and character, through which the action is represented.

1. Acting and Actors.

a. Are the performances of the actors truthful or believable? Do they arouse "imaginative sympathy and moral judgment"?[18] What do their physical features contribute to characterization? How well do these actors portray the human qualities of these characters?[19]

b. How much do the actors rely on body language or paralinguistic behavior to convey complex inner thoughts and feelings that are difficult to enact?

2. Visuals.[20]

a. Visual experience is non-linear; it is simultaneous. An episode is time-constrained; that is, it proceeds through time but it does not have to be chronological. Visual representation of time can occur in flashbacks, simultaneous events, flashaheads, etc.

b. Lighting--How are different aspects of lighting used such as shadowing, direct light, lighting angles, etc.?

c. Camera--How are such devices as camera angles, close-ups, pans, zooms, fade-outs, etc. used? What do they emphasize? When and how does the movement of the camera become a significant part of mise en scène? What is the point-of-view of the camera? Does the camera serve as a narrator? Describe how the uses of the camera serve as strategies or techniques for supporting and enhancing the message or purpose. Look for such things as character close-up, camera devices combined with lighting techniques, camera focus on scenic detail, etc.

d. Color--What kind of messages do colors convey? What are the prevailing colors? What are typical associations with given colors, i.e.,

symbols, emotions, archetypes, etc.? Which characters wear what colors?

e. Setting--Describe the settings. What are the predominant colors? What are the symbolic qualities? Are the settings clean, warm, artificial, etc.?

D. Sound Elements.

1. Dialog--the language, conversation, soliloquies, and occasional dramatic narration.

a. Does the dialog represent "complicated thought, delicate shades of passion," or other kinds of things difficult to enact?[21] How is dialog related to body language? What poetic or literary devices are used in the dialog, i.e., metaphor, analogy, synecdoche, alliteration, etc.?[22]

b. Narration.[23]

1) What kinds of images are created by the narration? Is the content of the narration dramatized during the drama? Under what conditions does such dramatization occur?

2) Where does narration occur in the drama? Who is the narrator? What relationship does the narrator have to the implied author? What purposes does narration serve? Does it reinforce theme, summarize theme, project into the future, describe the past, reveal undramatized events or feelings and thoughts, etc.? Is the narrator dramatized or undramatized, that is, is the narrator an actual character in the drama or just an extraneous voice-over?

3) What forms of narration exist in the drama? Do other aspects of the drama such as scene or camera narrate? Who is actually "seeing" the events most of the time? Are there disguised narrators, i.e., characters whose main function is to tell the audience something it needs to know? Is the narrator a participant affecting events or merely an observer? Is the narrator

reliable or unreliable? That is, are his statements and observations consistent with the implied author's, or are they in conflict with those of the implied author?

2. Music.

a. How is music used in TV drama? What does it emphasize, e.g., theme, character, emotion, etc.? What reactions does the music arouse? What is the effect of arrangement and selection of instruments? Is music used to enhance, support, contrast, maintain continuity, etc.?[24]

E. Tone.

Tone is an attitude or general orientation within the drama. It is created by several factors. For instance, a tone is established when a writer chooses drama or comedy as his mode of expression. Additionally, the choice of strategies creates tone. Didacticism will create a sermonic tone. Other aspects of the drama contribute tonal qualities, i.e., music, settings, and colors. Tone can be described as

> personal, direct, satirical, sympathetic, angry, bitter, dramatic, intense, scholarly, distant, [intimate], etc. [Other things to look for when describing language are] vividness, level [of usage], social acceptability, sentence length, references to the audience, . . . statements about attitudes toward the audience, . . . [statements about the implied author's relation to the audience].[25]

F. Purpose.

1. The purpose or purposes of the drama consist of its thesis or theses, its themes, and its messages. It includes the responses desired from the audience and the effect of themes or messages on the audience. The desired effects may involve confronting, shaming, alienating, pacifying, disturbing, appeasing, etc. Purposes may be to clarify, interpret or reinterpret, divide, choose sides, support, praise, blame, see the implications of, etc.[26]

2. The purpose may be directly stated; it may be inferred from dramatic material presented or omitted, relationships between the implied author and the audience, use of pronouns, inferred from supporting materials, dialog, proofs, etc.[27]

G. Method of Development.

1. How does the drama develop from beginning to end? Principles of unification have developmental features. How do these structure or limit the drama? Is the direction of action toward the denouement a steadily rising action or is there a peripety or reversal in direction? Where do pivotal events occur in the drama?

2. How often is the episode interrupted with commercial breaks? Is there a climactic event in each segment? Is there a "cliff-hanger"? Where do segments peak? What is the nature of these climaxes, emotional conflicts, revelation, reversal, etc.?

3. What role does narration play? Is the order in which events are presented sequential, based on flashback, synchronic, etc.?

H. Strategies.

1. What ploys or devices are used by the implied author to achieve his purposes? How are the purposes clarified, illustrated, explained, made vivid, and reinforced? Such strategies may include comparison; contrast; identification; emotional arousal; enactment of actions; enhancement of probability; archetypal, stereotypic, or mythic associations; organization of the setting; music; camera angles and shots; lighting; narration; continuity; sentimentality; etc.

2. What devices and materials are used as proofs, evidence, and supports for the purposes? Consider how characters, plot, and elements of production become supporting materials.

I. Implied Audience.[28]

> Who is being addressed? How does the . . . [drama] select its audience? Is there more than one audience? What is the relationship between the . . . [implied author] and his audience(s) or what is the attitude of the . . . [implied author] toward his audience(s)? What audience does the . . . [implied author] state that he is addressing? Who will be eliminated from the audience and why?[29]

J. Implied Author.[30]

> What is the function of the . . . [drama] for its . . . [implied author]? How does it serve to identify him, to create an identity for him? Consider the degree to which . . . [the drama] functions as self-expression and self-persuasion. Considering all elements, what is the character, nature or persona of the . . . [implied author] as evidenced by the . . . [drama] examined--philosophical assumptions about man, truth and society evinced by the . . . [drama] are relevant here. Simply put, if this . . . [drama] were the only extant artifact from which the character of the [actual] author could be known, what statements could you make about him? Ignore, if possible, extrinsic information that you have about [the actual author's] background, experience, education, etc.[31]

2. What is the relationship of the implied author to his audience? Does he preach his message? Does he present his message with reasoned arguments and evidence? Does he play on the audience's sympathies? Does he present one side or multiple points of view?

II. The Analytic Stage of the Critical Process.

> Unlike the descriptive stage of criticism which is wholly intrinsic and organic, confined exclusively to the examination of the . . . [drama] itself, the analytic stage of criticism involves consideration of and addition of certain extrinsic factors and information from outside the . . . [drama]. The primary thrust of analysis is two-fold. 1) to recreate the historical context in order to determine 2) why the . . . [author] made the choices that he did in purpose, thesis, mode of development, selection of supports, style, audience selected, etc. . . . At this stage, the critic is testing his descriptive inferences against outside information . . . he is refining earlier hypotheses about purpose, audience, etc., in light of additional information. The basic question the critic

> is seeking to answer is, in light of the time and circumstances, the issue, other persuasive forces, the nature, past activities and associations of the . . . [author] and the audience(s) addressed, why did the . . . [author] make the choices described in the preceding stage of criticism.[32]

A. Actual Audience.

1. Who in fact viewed the drama? How does this audience compare to the implied audience?

> Was there more than one audience? . . . What attitudes did the audience hold? What was their attitude toward the issue, the . . . [author], the historical situation? What cultural values did they hold? What influence did age, occupation, political affiliation, cultural experience, economic status and social status have on attitudes with which they approached the . . . [author] and the issue?[33]

2. What empirical data on audience effects is available to enlighten the actual audience of this drama?

B. The Issue.

> What is the fundamental [external or societal] question to which the . . . [drama] gives an answer? How did this come to be an issue? What events have influenced discussion of this issue? What were popular beliefs about the issue? What responses did the author desire from his audience(s) [regarding the issue]?[34]

C. Historical Context.

1. Series history--What elements, events, situations, have occurred in the history of this series that help describe this episode? That help achieve series continuity? That develop character, etc.? What is repetitive, familiar? To what extent are the actors identified with the characters they play?

2. Social-political-economic context.

> What are the social, political and economic pressures on the . . . [author] and audience(s)? . . . What are the other persuasive forces operating in the historical scene? What . . . [related drama or

> oratory has] the audience heard and read [or seen]? What information is being disseminated about the issue? What persons or stands are alternatives to the position of the author of the . . . [drama]? What arguments require refutation if the . . . [author] is to be successful?[35]

3. Historical authenticity--How well do period dramas approximate actual period conditions? If these dramas are based on other media representations, i.e. novels, biographies, etc., how accurate is the treatment?

D. Supporting Material.

1. How does the symbolic reality created in the drama compare with what is known about the issues from psychological and sociological research and other resources?

III. The Judgmental or Evaluative Stage of the Critical Process.

What follows are guidelines and questions which should be asked subsequent to the descriptive and analytical stages. These guidelines enable the critic to make final methodological decisions about how to best illuminate and evaluate the drama.

A. What are the most distinctive or unique characteristics of this . . . [television drama] which should be emphasized, highlighted and featured in criticism? Criticism should reveal the . . . [drama] it examines, explore its peculiarities, and expose its internal workings. This question . . . is intended to aid the critic in making the critical act a distinctive contribution to understanding the particular nature of the act and to producing innovative, organic criticism. It should, as a result, aid the critic in avoiding formulary, prescriptive criticism, a process of applying pre-existing categories without considering the nature of the act being criticized. . . .

B. Are there criteria suggested . . . [in the work] which imply the bases on which the work should be judged? With some frequency, . . . [authors] suggest basic standards in terms of which they have examined a problem or by which they judge social action. If these are suggested, the critic should consider carefully how the act matches . . . [these internal] criteria for evaluation and, if possible, develop an intrinsic system of criticism. . . .

C. What critical method will allow me, the critic, to focus on the criterion or criteria (or considerations) which seem to me to be the most significant in evaluating the merits of the act(s)? The critic, at this point, has made a decision that certain judgments or comments about the act need to be made--the work is deemed highly unethical, an unusual violation of a truth criterion, a unique aesthetic act, an original perspective on an ethical problem, a major re-interpretation of a situation or of a philosophical concept of man, truth, or society--and the critic seeks a method that permits this comment, this judgment to be made forcefully and clearly. In short, the critic seeks a perspective that will assist in stating, explaining, and demonstrating the most significant judgment that the critic thinks can be made about this work.

D. What critical approach would be most antagonistic, most condemnatory? What system would, in other words, produce the most negative evaluation of this act(s)? The critic is here acting as antagonist (taking that role) as a corrective to personal biases, as a means of creating a conflict between the . . . [drama] and other standards or methods of analysis. This question is designed to focus the critic's attention on what a . . . [dramatic rhetorical act] is not, to constrain the critic to question impressions of the . . . [act]. The critic, ultimately, must make a choice between the values of antagonistic criticism and the values of revelatory criticism which focuses on the peculiarities of an act(s) and explores its strength(s). Obviously, the critic will often seek some integration of these two perspectives, difficult though that may be.[36]

I have used this system to analyze several television dramas including Little House on the Prairie, Family, and The Waltons. It has proved very effective at revealing the literary and rhetorical nature of these programs. Specific discussion of application must be reserved for future papers.

End Notes

[1] Edwin Black, Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method (New York: Macmillan, 1965), pp. 42-60.

[2] Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "Rhetorical Criticism: Elements of the Descriptive Stage of the Critical Process," paper distributed in Seminar in Rhetorical Criticism, The Univ. of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, 1976, p. 2.

[3] Elder Olson, Tragedy and the Theory of Drama (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1961), pp. 43-45.

[4] Olson, pp. 43-45.

[5] Olson, pp. 45-46.

[6] Olson, p. 46.

[7] Olson, p. 70.

[8] Olson, pp. 46-47.

[9] Olson, p. 70.

[10] Olson, p. 47.

[11] Olson, pp. 48-49.

[12] Olson, p. 49.

[13] Olson, p. 49.

[14] Olson, p. 49.

[15] Olson, pp. 49-50.

[16] Olson, p. 50.

[17] Richard L. Johannesen, Ethics in Human Communication (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1975), p. 72.

[18] David Thorburn, "Television Melodrama," in Television as a Cultural Force, ed. Richard Adler and Douglass Cater (New York: Praeger; Palo Alto, Cal.: Aspen Institute Program on Communication & Society, 1976), p. 81.

[19] Richard Adler, "Introduction: A Context for Criticism," in Television as a Cultural Force, ed. Richard Adler and Douglass Cater (New York: Praeger; Palo Alto, Cal.: Aspen Institute Program on Communication & Society, 1976), pp. 8-9.

[20] For a detailed discussion of visual techniques see Herbert Zettl, Sight, Sound, Motion: Applied Media Aesthetics (Belmont, Cal.: Wadsworth, 1973).

[21] Olson, p. 112.

[22] For a detailed discussion of literary devices see Carroll Arnold, Criticism of Oral Rhetoric (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1974).

[23] Some of these questions were stimulated by a discussion of narration in Wayne C. Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago: The Univ. of Chicago Press, 1961).

[24] See Herbert Zettl, chapters 14 and 15 for more information on sound.

[25] Campbell, "Rhetorical Criticism: Elements of the Descriptive Stage," p. 1.

[26] Campbell, "Rhetorical Criticism: Elements of the Descriptive Stage," p. 1.

[27] Campbell, "Rhetorical Criticism: Elements of the Descriptive Stage," p. 1.

[28] In "The Second Persona," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 56 (April 1970), 112, Edwin Black describes an implied audience which he calls the second persona. Looking at a discourse alone, one can extract "the audience it implies" without making claims about the actual audience. "It seems a useful methodological assumption to hold that rhetorical discourses, either singly or cumulatively in a persuasive movement, will imply an auditor, and that in most cases the implication will be sufficiently suggestive as to enable the critic to link this implied auditor to an ideology. The best evidence in discourse for this implication will be the substantive claims that are made, but the most likely evidence available will be in the form of stylistic tokens."

[29] Campbell, "Rhetorical Criticism: Elements of the Descriptive Stage," p. 1.

[30] "As he [the author] writes, he creates . . . an implied version of 'himself' . . . ." As the reader reads a work, he gets a picture or an image of the author from what he reads. Wayne Booth calls this image of the author the "implied author." Another term is "persona." The implied author is that image of an author of a work that the reader or viewer gets from the work itself. The implied author of a work has those qualities, beliefs, and assumptions which the reader can detect intrinsically in the work. "Our sense of the implied author includes not only the extractable meanings but also the moral and emotional content of each bit of action and suffering of all of the characters." The implied author of a work may be only a partial representation of the actual author and at times even quite different fron the actual author. This formulation of the implied author is based on Wayne Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago: The Univ. of Chicago Press, 1961), pp. 70-74.

[31] Campbell, "Rhetorical Criticism: Elements of the Descriptive Stage," p. 2.

[32] Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "Worksheet on Analytical Stage of Critical Process," paper distributed in Seminar in Rhetorical Criticism, The Univ. of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, 1976, p. 1.

[33] Campbell, "Worksheet on Analytical Stage," p. 1.

[34] Campbell, "Worksheet on Analytical Stage," p. 1.

[35] Campbell, "Worksheet on Analytical Stage," p. 1.

[36] Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "Interpretation: The Third Stage of the Critical Process," paper distributed in Seminar in Rhetorical Criticism, The Univ. of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, 1976.

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